

## **New Alzheimer`s research unit established**

14 March 2006

A new research unit specialising in Alzheimer`s Disease and related disorders will be established in Queensland.

UQ`s School of Medicine, through the Discipline of Psychiatry, has been awarded \$450,000 by the Royal Brisbane & Women`s Hospital Research Foundation to establish the unit.

The award, established through a generous bequest, will be presented to Associate Professor Gerard Byrne tomorrow afternoon by Queensland Governor Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC at the annual RBWH Research Foundation Awards Ceremony.

The Alzheimer's Disease Research Unit is a joint initiative between the RBWH Geriatric Psychiatry and Geriatric Medicine Services, The RBWH Research Foundation and The University of Queensland.

It aims to develop a strong track record in research that will improve the quality of life of both dementia sufferers and their carers. The unit will have an initial focus on behavioural and psychological symptoms such as apathy, agitation, anxiety and delusions.

The first study conducted by the research unit will be exploring whether or not it is possible to predict when these symptoms will occur in the disease process and who will be affected by them.

"Ultimately, we would like to develop interventions to either treat these symptoms or prevent them from occurring in the first place," Professor Byrne said.

He said the Alzheimer`s Disease Research Unit was actively seeking volunteers to help with its studies.

"The unit is particularly interested in people with mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease but is happy to hear from people with memory or other cognitive difficulties who have not yet been diagnosed," he said.

Those who are interested in participating in research or who would like more information should contact Liz Arnold on 07 3365 5147 or [elizabeth.arnold@uq.edu.au](mailto:elizabeth.arnold@uq.edu.au)

All research participants are closely followed by trained and experienced staff including psychiatrists, nurses and psychologists. They will be kept informed of the latest research being conducted and may be eligible to participate in trials of possible new treatments not yet available on the market.